

REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-36 are pending in the present application, with Claims 1, 15, and 24 being the independent claims. Claims 15-23 have been withdrawn from consideration.

Applicants hereby affirm the election of the invention of Group I, corresponding to Claims 1-14 and 24-36.

Claims 1 and 24 have been amended. Support for these amendments can be found in the original specification, and therefore no new matter has been added.

Claims 1-9, 11-14, 24-34, and 36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,122,403 (Rhoads) taken in combination with U.S. Patent No. 6,154,571 (Cox et al.). Claims 10 and 35 were rejected under Section 103 as being obvious over Rhoads and Cox et al. in further combination with U.S. Patent No. 6,334,721 (Horrigane). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for the reasons discussed below.

As recited in independent Claim 1, the present invention includes, *inter alia*, the features of extracting first information, including a registration signal used to correct the geometrical distortion of an image, and employing the results obtained at the extraction step to determine whether a process for extracting second information from said image is to be performed. As recited in independent Claim 24, the present invention includes, among others, the features of extracting from an image first information indicating that the image is a specific image and employing the results obtained at the first information extraction step to determine whether a process for extracting second information from the image is to be performed. Applicants submit that the cited art, even considered in combination, fails to disclose or suggest at least this combination of features.

Rhoads discloses that first information for correcting geometrical distortion is extracted from an image. However, as recognized in the Office Action, that patent does not disclose or suggest employing the results of the first step as claimed.

Cox et al. discloses that a digital watermark V is extracted, as shown in Step 18 of Fig. 1, and that a new signal ω is determined based on the extracted digital watermark V , as shown in Step 20 of Fig. 1. However, Applicants submit that Cox et al. likewise fails to disclose or suggest at least the feature of employing the results of a first extracting step to determine whether a process for extracting second information from an image is to be performed. Accordingly, even assuming the references could properly be combined, Applicants submit that the proposed combination would fail to include at least the aforementioned feature.

The other cited references also fails to disclose or suggest at least the above feature and therefore fail to remedy the aforementioned deficiencies of Rhoads and Cox et al.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that independent Claims 1 and 24 are patentable over the cited art. The dependent claims are patentable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims, as well as for the additional features they recite.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the outstanding rejections, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. L. Klock', written over a horizontal line.

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